

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE UNITED STATES CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION

Daniel S. Anthony, Executive Director
Mayor's Commission on Group Relations
(Since 1952 to the present)

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Gentlemen:

When your able Staff members assembled in my office more than a month ago, I told them that I felt the progress toward first class citizenship for all Americans depended not so much upon their fact-finding but rather upon their and your attitudes as to the methods for righting the wrongs of the past 300 years.

This afternoon, after 2 days of your hearings, I am ready to eat crow. I believe your witnesses and the testimony which they have given before this Commission is conclusive proof that facts are indeed necessary before attitudes can be changed. When members of the largest industries and building trade unions in this community admit that for reasons over which they have no control, very few or no Negroes are members of their organizations, then I submit, gentlemen, that the problem is so undeniably complex that the solution will be found only in a return to simple, forthright admissions and dramatic new approaches.

If we can admit that we and our predecessors have failed, then possibly we are prepared for some imaginative exploration: This approach, I am suggesting, is a carefully planned and sociologically executed Human Revival Program to expand the educational and employment opportunities of under-privileged and disadvantaged children in our community. New York City dubs it Higher Horizons. Newark calls it Expanded Opportunities. How can this relate to our City?

Newark is a City of 405,000 people, of which more than 142,000 or almost 40% are now Negro. This means that Newark has the largest proportional Negro population of any major metropolitan center north of the Mason-Dixon line. The fact that this great non-white population has lived for so long in peace and harmony with the decreasing majority white community is a tribute to the work of many individuals, some of whom you have heard here these past two days. More than that, it is a glowing tribute to the patience of our Negro population. Lest we test this patience to its bursting point, I am suggesting that we take the words of Mayor Hugh J. Addonizio quite seriously and consider this City a "working laboratory of democracy and the true pilot city of what will be and is to take place elsewhere in our great Nation". The Mayor went on to say that "Newark is the research center of the urban frontier, and what we learn and develop here will be used in every major community throughout the world".

He did not have time to tell you that one of these pilot projects is a brand new Action-Research experiment designed to help minority children get into the expanded opportunities of a rapidly automating society.

Dr. Harry Bredemeier, Professor of Sociology at Rutgers, who has been sitting here in the audience for two days, is the Director of the Fellowship Program at the Urban Studies Center, and it is he who has led the thinking of the academicians and a group of Newark citizens in this exciting new approach to what we might call a "catching-up" process.

Although neither Dr. Bredemeier nor any other individual can claim sole authorship of this idea, many of us who have thought long and hard

about civil rights in America believe that equal education and employment in 1962 is a snare and a delusion. It will take another 20 or 30 years of more than equal education and better than equal education to make up for the unequal education of the past centuries. Without this educational readjustment, equal employment opportunity becomes the illusion you have observed for two days here; and integrated housing remains an idle hope for the far distant future.

Therefore, this plan calls for massive social welfare services, including psychiatric treatment to disturbed and separated parents. It includes helping stations for troubled families as well as Higher Horizons and Expanded Employment Opportunities for children from the first through the 7th grades. Obviously I have not the time to spell out the details of the program. This is being formulated by the Rutgers team, the Newark Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Edward Kennelly, under the direction of Mayor Addonizio.

My intent is to give you only the concept so that this erudite Commission may deliberate on the necessity of recommendations to the President and the Congress. In plain terms, cities like Newark which are paying the price of our country's apathy and indifference to a great segment of our population, can no longer continue to bear the monstrous financial burden alone. Foundations, State Governments and the Federal Government itself must ~~intervene~~ with a helping and generous financial hand. If indeed those citizens who have been deprived of the emoluments of education and employment in the greatest democracy known to man are not included as full participants in the mainstream of our free enterprise system, we have

defaulted on our Constitutional promise.

After observing the sincerity and wisdom of this Commission for two days, I know that you will seriously consider suggesting to our Congress and our Chief Executive this simple concept of Human Renewal: It is that the redevelopment of our cities will be a meaningless gesture unless the human renewal of our citizenry and particularly of our disadvantaged minority youth becomes a part of the ethic of this land.

Is it not true that urban renewal may fail if our efforts toward human renewal do not become a cornerstone of our country's redevelopment philosophy?

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